

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A visual monitoring system for monitoring an interior area of a mobile platform and providing a video signal to a remotely located monitoring station, the system comprising:

5 at least one camera positioned within a predetermined area of said mobile platform; and

an electronics subsystem adapted to be disposed within the mobile platform, and in communication with said camera, for receiving an output video signal from said camera;

10 said electronics subsystem including:

a processor for converting said output video signal to a streaming video signal suitable for transmission in accordance with a wide area network protocol; and

15 a modem for converting said streaming video signal into a data stream output for transmission over an existing in-flight telephone system on said aircraft to said monitoring station.

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2. The system of claim 1, wherein said electronics subsystem is contained within a single enclosure.

25 3. The system of claim 1, wherein said processor comprises:

a central processing unit; and

a random access memory in communication with said central processing unit.

30 4. The system of claim 1, further comprising:

a read only memory in communication with said central processing unit for storing a driver used by said central processing unit.

5        5.     The system of claim 1, further comprising a universal serial bus (USB) port for interfacing said output of said camera with said processor.

10      6.     The system of claim 1, wherein said camera comprises a charge coupled display (CCD) camera.

7.     The system of claim 1, wherein said streaming video signal comprises an Internet protocol video signal.

8. A visual monitoring system for monitoring an interior area of a mobile platform and providing a video signal representative of said interior area to a remotely located monitoring station, the system comprising:
  - 5 at least one camera positioned within a predetermined area of said mobile platform; and
    - a compact electronics component carried in the mobile platform and located remotely from said camera, and in communication with said camera, for receiving an output video signal
  - 10 from said camera;
    - said compact electronics component including:
      - an enclosure;
      - a processor disposed within said enclosure for converting said output video signal to a streaming video signal suitable for transmission in accordance with a wide area network protocol; and
    - 15 a modem disposed within said enclosure for converting said streaming video signal into a data stream output for transmission over an existing in-flight telephone system on said mobile platform to said base station.
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  9. The system of claim 8, wherein said streaming video signal comprises an Internet protocol video signal.
  - 25 10. The system of claim 8, further comprising a random access memory and communicating with said processor.
  11. The system of claim 8, further comprising a read only memory (ROM) communicating with said processor.

12. The system of claim 8, further comprising a plurality of cameras disposed at a plurality of locations within said mobile platform and communicating with said processor.
- 5        13. The system of claim 8, further comprising a Universal Serial Bus (USB) port for interfacing said camera with said processor.
14. The system of claim 8, wherein said camera comprises a charge coupled device (CCD) camera.

15. A visual monitoring system for monitoring an interior area of an aircraft and providing a video signal representative of said interior area to a ground station via an existing in-flight telephone system on the aircraft, the system comprising:
- 5           at least one camera positioned within a predetermined area of said aircraft for generating an output video signal representing a designated area which said camera is focused on; and
- 10           a compact electronics component carried in the aircraft and located remotely from said camera, and in communication with said camera, for receiving said output video signal from said camera;
- 15           said compact electronics component including:
- an enclosure;
- an interface port associated with said enclosure for interfacing with said camera to receive said output video signal;
- 20           a central processing unit disposed within said enclosure and in communication with said interface port for converting said output video signal to a streaming video signal suitable for transmission in accordance with a wide area network protocol; and
- 25           a modem disposed within said enclosure in communication with said central processing unit for converting said streaming video signal into a data stream output for transmission over said existing in-flight telephone system on said aircraft to said ground station.
16. The system of claim 15, wherein said interface port comprises a Universal Serial Bus (USB) port.
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17. The system of claim 15, wherein said streaming video signal comprises an Internet protocol streaming video signal.

18. The system of claim 15, wherein said camera comprises a charge coupled device (CCD) camera.

5 19. The system of claim 15, further comprising a plurality of cameras disposed in predetermined locations within said aircraft and simultaneously interfaced with said interface port for providing video pictures of said predetermined locations within said aircraft.

20. A method for visually monitoring a predetermined location within a mobile platform and providing a substantially real time video signal representative of said predetermined location to a  
5 base station via an existing in-flight telephone system of said mobile platform, said method comprising:

using a camera to monitor a predetermined location within said mobile platform and to generate an output video signal in accordance therewith;

10 using an electronics subassembly to receive said output video signal and to convert said output video signal into a streaming video signal in accordance with a wide area network protocol; and

15 using said electronics subassembly to convert said streaming video signal into a format suitable for transmission over said existing in-flight telephone system to said base station.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein using said electronics subassembly to convert said streaming video signal comprises using a modem.

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22. The method of claim 20, wherein using said camera comprises using a charge coupled device (CCD) camera.

23. The method of claim 20, wherein using said electronics subassembly to receive said output video signal comprises using a universal serial bus (USB) interface to receive said output video signal and to convert said output video signal into said streaming video signal.